GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:3109
ANSWERED ON:12.03.2003
DENIGRATION OF GANDHIJI IN FOREIGN MAGAZINE
ASHOK KUMAR PATEL;BHERU LAL MEENA;CHARAN DAS MAHANT;GAJENDRA SINGH RAJUKHEDI;MANIKRAO HODLYA GAVIT;RAJO SINGH;T.M. SELVAGANAPATHI;TARACHAND BHAGORA;YEMPARALA VENKATESWARA RAO

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government are aware that a foreign magazine has denigrated the Father of the Nation, Gandhiji;

(b) if so, the details of the matter thereof;

(c) whether a protest has been lodged by the Government against the said magazine; and

(d) if so, the outcome thereof?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI VINOD KHANNA)

(a) Yes.

(b)&(c) The US magazine `Maxim`, in its February 2003 issue, carried an alleged `humour` piece depicting a man beating up an image of Mahatma Gandhi. The article hurt the sensibilities of the Indian community and others, who strongly objected to it. The Indian Embassy also took up the matter with the magazine`s Editor-in-Chief.

(d) The Editor-in-Chief of `Maxim` tendered an apology and explained that no offence was intended to Mahatma Gandhi; that the magazine believed in Mahatma Gandhi`s teachings of peace; and that Gandhiji was chosen as the subject of the magazine`s cartoon because he was the `least likely target of aggression imaginable`. The explanation and apology offered by the magazine suggested that the article in question was published due to a misplaced sense of humour, rather than as a deliberate act of insult.